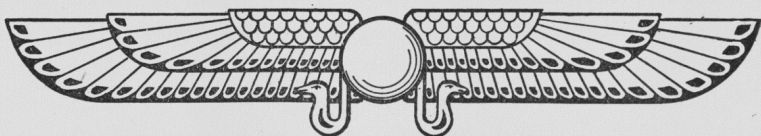


"Point out the 'Way'—However dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness."



MERCURY.

EDITORIAL + STAFF:

WILLIAM JOHN WALTERS, +
+ EDITH SEARS, +
+ + MARIE A. WALSH.

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THE BHAGAVAD GITA.

[Continued from April No.]

THE religious nature of the Gita being so well established, it may, at first sight, seem strange that such a purely metaphysical treatise, containing the essence of occult secrets, should be contained in a poem of war and terrestrial passions, and should be found just before the description of the battle is begun. But this alone shows the lofty ideals and talent of the poet, for an examination of the work will show that the B. G. is just in its proper place and could not have been inserted anywhere else in the Mahabharata. In effect, just before the opening of the contest, Arjuna, the foremost of all the warriors present, is lead to inspect the opposing ranks, so as to choose a foe worthy of his valor. His war-chariot being driven between the two armies, he beholds on both sides the flower of the manhood of India, whom death is on the eve of mowing down, and among the enemy are those of his own blood and kin, "good men and well-wishers, as well as foes, sires and grand-sires, preceptors, uncles and nephews, brothers, fathers and sons, fathers-in-law and kindred," worthy of a better fate than that of death through a fraternal contest over the illusory interests of earthly power and wealth. The claims of blood and friendship then assert themselves, overcoming Arjuna's proud

heart with strange and conflicting emotions, and horror-stricken at the idea of committing manslaughter and fratricide, he becomes sick of war and loath of doing his duty—the duty of the warrior to fight and die for the cause of justice and right * * * “he no longer perceives any benefit from killing kindred in battle, nor does he long any further for victory, or kingdom, or pleasures.” The discouragement is so great that only one thing can make Arjuna fulfill his duty, this being the divulgence of the knowledge of what the World and Man really are, and of what those changes called life and death really mean. Krishna conveys this information and Arjuna becomes convinced that there can be for man no higher prospect than “the doing of one’s duty, regardless of consequences.”

By considering the true significance of the principal actors of the little poem, we may better realize the nature of the work.

Krishna, the friend and adviser, and also the charioteer or actual guide of the horses and chariot,—mind and body,—is the Guru or teacher, while Arjuna, the fighter, the temporary occupant and lord of the chariot, is Krishna’s chela or pupil. But who is Krishna? An Avatar of a Deity; what is an Avatar? In popular parlance, the word conveys various meanings, some very erroneous; here it is employed strictly as a voluntary reincarnation into a human body, for a special saving purpose, of a high, divine entity, who is no longer subject to the laws of ordinary human reincarnation*. In other words, in Bhagavad-Gita, Krishna is the “Logos,” the *Word made flesh*, a Watcher, a Savior come down to that particular nation at a time of special need; and H. P. B.’s valuable Glossary tells us that the whole story of his life, and especially of his birth, is an exact prototype of the New-Testament story of Jesus, who was really a Krishna sent at a peculiar time, to his particular People, the Jews. But the familiarity of the dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna shows also that this last is something more, in his special relation to the other; in fact, esoterically, the Krishna of the Gita is Narayana, the Father in secret, the Higher Self, the individuality, or the manifested Atma-Buddhi of Arjuna, who is Nara, the personality, or Lower Ego.

Thus Arjuna is not only the hero of a fighting family of chief-

*See “Avatars,” *Theosophist*, XV, 639.

tains, and the principal figure of the epic; he is essentially the picture of man as a race and man as an individual, he is in fact Manas, the Monad, the fifth principle or guiding force of the living entity called man, who has to sit in the chariot and preside over the fight of life, but whose sense of duty is constantly assailed by doubts and by the brotherly attraction and affection for his earthly kindred,—the desires of the flesh,—and who would eventually succumb and refuse to do his duty which is to fight and kill those intimate foes, were it not for the advice, the moral help and force of Krishna, the Higher Self, the only entity who can truthfully advise him. Like each one of us, Arjuna is a man in a special condition of life which is the outcome of the karma of his previous existences, and he cannot avoid fighting out the battle—well or ill—the seeds of which were sown by himself; if he wants to regain his lost kingdom, the kingdom he possessed in a former age, or perhaps on another planet, like ourselves, he must rely solely on his own exertions, not on any vicarious help or atonement; in a similar manner, all of us, who are now interested in Theosophy, striving to help others through our studies, are Arjunas who have been before this life, engaged in identical pursuits and are again called upon to renew the fight and do our duty of learning by hard personal work, yet not for personal benefit or aggrandizement.

But Arjuna's fight has a still more specialized bearing; it refers not only, as Mr. Judge says in the preface to his translation of the Gita, "to the great warfare that mankind as a whole carries on, but moreover to the special struggle which is inevitable as soon as any one unit in the human family resolves to allow his higher nature to govern him in his life." Hence Arjuna can also be taken to represent especially the neophyte who undertakes the task of developing himself for spiritual good and calls on the help of his Higher Self. What is described as happening to him, in the poem, will befall every aspirant to occult knowledge, and the various chapters of the Gita are the allegory of the trials, sufferings and different stages of progress which will be his lot; "opposition from friends and from all the habits he has acquired, as also that which naturally arises from hereditary tendencies, will confront him, and then it will depend upon how he will listen to his "Krishna," the Logos shining within and speaking within, whether he will

succeed or fail," and the instructions of the Gita can serve as a beacon-light to all who start on the perilous journey of Initiation. In particular, the neophyte will experience in the very first stage, Arjuna's despondency and great sorrow; his internal change will cause the rebellion of the lower self, from which will result a kind of despair, caused as Subba Row very nicely expresses it, "by his having to give up all his old affections for kindred, parents and children, as well as his aspirations for objects of worldly ambition, which, perhaps, have been his associates for many incarnations; when called upon to give up all these things, the neophyte feels a kind of blank, before he realizes his higher possibilities; after having given up his associations, his life seems to vanish into nothing, he seems to have lost all hope and to have no object to live and work for; he sees no signs of his own future progress, all before him seems darkness, and a sort of pressure comes upon the soul, under which it begins to droop," and if he does not manfully struggle, he will fall back and make no further progress. But, if the fighting Arjuna listens to the exhortations of the internal Krishna, he will reach the stage of the second chapter, and begin to perceive the illusiveness of this world as against the permanence of Atma; in the third stage, he will realize the true nature of Karma, and recognize the soldiers and generals on his side, which are his good faculties and tendencies, thereby perceiving that the very names of the warriors on either side indicate these various faculties and tendencies and their opposites. Thus every allegorical picture of the poem will unfold a volume of occult meaning. Even the fact of there being five Pandavas brothers is pregnant with signification, together with the allegorical assertion that they are of divine origin—not their father's generation—through the curse condemning their father to be childless, and so is the other fact of their having one wife in common, a very natural thing when the esoteric explanation is given.

It would be out of place here to go into an analysis of the eighteen chapters, though this might more emphatically show the value of the work; but to sum up its subject, it can be said that the Bhagavad-Gita's scope, its whole object is to show that the true destiny of man is union with the Divine,—also indicating the means of consummating this destiny, through the acquirement of knowl-

edge of the Supreme, and thus only: "Those who seek this knowledge become free from the miseries of rebirth, while those who do not care for it remain bound to material existence and to its wheel of good and bad results." Thus, through true Yoga—not senseless austerities—can we obtain Nirvana, or reunion with the Spirit. To this effect, the book tends to impress on the reader, four principal points, which we find in all Theosophical teachings:

(a) The importance of selflessness.

(b) The necessity of doing our duty in every path of life, not for the sake of the possible results, which only tend to earth and lead to more rebirths and further battles, but for the sake of duty itself, "it is better," says Krishna, "to do one's own duty, even though it be devoid of excellence, than to perform another's duty well; death is better in the performance of one's own duty, while doing another's duty is productive of danger" * * * then again: "he who understands the whole universe should not cause those people who are slow and ignorant of the universe to relapse from their duty" * * and even more emphatically: "firmly persisting in Yoga (religious practices), still perform thy duty."

(c) The importance of believing in the eternity of life; says Krishna, "I myself never was not, nor thou, nor all the princes of this earth, nor shall we ever hereafter cease to be; as the Lord of this mortal frame experienceth therein infancy, youth, and old age, so in future incarnations will it meet again the same; one who is confirmed in this belief is not disturbed by anything that may come to pass." Or, to quote Sir E. Arnold's beautiful poetry,

"Never the Spirit was born, the Spirit shall cease to be never,
Never was time it was not, end and beginning are dreams,
Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the Spirit forever,
Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems."

(d) The absurdity of the sense of separateness: says Krishna, "I am the same to all beings;" and again, "wicked and good women, vile Sudras or holy Brahmins, without distinction of faith or ritual, all can reach the same salvation, all worship in fact the same Spirit," thus leaving far below the useless clash of dogmas, schools and opinions; what a beautiful plea for absolute religious tolerance, to be recommended to the meditations of those fanatics of all sects, who claim that all who do not think as they do will be eternally

damned ! but moreover, since every man, like every world, is permeated by the same Divine Spirit; there can be no separateness, every monad must be a brother to every other monad, bound to him, sharing all his experiences, without there being, for any one individual, the possibility of escaping, except through renunciation of personal separateness and selfishness, from the collective Karma of the race to which one belongs. Even supreme bliss, "effacement in the Supreme Spirit, is gained by the right seeing sage whose sins are exhausted, who hath cut asunder all doubts, whose senses and organs are under control, and who is devoted to the well-being of all Creatures;" but if this last qualification is missing, the sage is not yet perfect and cannot obtain the desired union with Parahatma. So, even to-day, we are told that the only work, for those who want to tread the Path to Perfection, and who long to be helped themselves, is the work of helping others; what is asked of each of us Theosophists, is to devote ourselves to assist and instruct humanity, to the extent of our ability, nothing more or less.

Another of the principal points of the Bhagavad-Gita is to teach the right direction of activity in our thought and life spheres, based on its philosophy, which is a philosophy of Love and Action, "*love* transcending all forms and all limits, harmonizing the Aspirant in the Universal All, and *action* done in accord with the fulfillment of natural laws without any consideration of consequences." In the words of Mrs. Besant, the object of the whole teaching is to "lift the Aspirant from the lower levels of renunciation where objects are renounced, to the loftier heights where desires are dead, and where the Yogi dwells in calm and ceaseless contemplation, while his body and mind are actively employed in discharging the duties that fall to his lot in life."

Finally, a writer in the *Path*, V. C. Lenkar, epitomizes very neatly the whole work, as follows: "The Bhagavad is a poetic and exoteric exposition of the occult truths and philosophical tenets of the Vedanta; its object is to throw on every fact of human life the light of a religious, moral and philosophical reason, and to show to what scientific heights of esoteric advancement Humanity can reach, in respect to all questions of life and mind." And these objects are precisely what Theosophy claims to study and elucidate.

But, as I said above, to realize fully the import of the Bhagavad-Gita, keys must be used. Of course, for the student of Theosophy, the first ones to be applied are those of the "Secret Doctrine," and there can be no doubt that were it possible for us to use all of the seven keys mentioned by H. P. B., our understanding of the poem would be superabundant.

Having thus arrived so far in this presentation, I think it cannot be wondered at that the Bhagavad-Gita should, in all ages, have elicited the greatest admiration, even of readers who, not having the necessary keys, could not grasp the full value of the work; nor is it surprising that the most laudatory expressions should have been lavished on it, to characterize its merits, by those who knew more of its internal wealth, and that it should be held in the highest esteem, claimed as their own by every one of the Indian sects without exception, save, of course, the Moham-medan and Christian exclusivists. It has been termed a wonderful, divine, blessed, priceless book. Sankaracharya—one of the most prominent and revered Vedic Teachers—calls the Gita "the collected essence of all the Vedas," and this must have been, for him, saying a good deal, since all the Vedas are supposed to be entirely divine wisdom communicated by direct revelation. It is an authoritative book, for it is said: "The Lord's Song being well sung, what use is there in other and voluminous Scriptures?" Its study is a saving, redeeming deed, and Krishna himself declares that "he who shall expound this most mysterious colloquy to those who have love for Me shall, without doubt, come to Me," and no one on Earth "shall be more beloved unto the Divinity," while he who shall listen to the Gita's teachings, "shall be freed from sin and obtain paradise.' * * * "It is a great poem," says a modern translator, Mohini Chatterji, "a poem whose author must have been both poet and prophet * * and, beyond doubt, it is the best book in existence for study by the spiritually minded, for it is suited to all conditions of men; it is short, it is complete and not ambiguous, it is direct, speaking as friend to friend or teacher to pupil, and thus is not coldly impersonal, the teaching is preserved in the very words of Krishna, only the few introductory verses being the production of the sage Vyasa." Then again the same translator says: "As soon as I open it, it

seems to seize upon my very soul! * * The truth that was enshrined in this book 5,000 years ago is as necessary to me as it was to him who first heard it, perhaps more so. Do I need further proof that truth abides forever and that there is a something in man that neither grows nor dies?" And, for this not to be supposed to be a mere solitary effusion of a Hindu enthusiast over his national literature, listen to what a German translator, Schlegel, has to say: "Reverence of masters is considered by the Brahmins the most sacred of duties, therefore, thee first, most holy Prophet, interpreter of the Deity, by whatever name thou wast called among mortals, the author of this poem, by whose oracles the mind is rapt with ineffable delight to doctrines lofty, eternal and divine, thee first, I say, I hail and shall always worship at thy feet!"

Many more laudatory quotations, expressing similar enthusiastic admiration, I could adduce here, but these will suffice, and I now hope that it will have been made sufficiently clear why the sacred Bhagavad-Gita has been H. P. B.'s choice * * not because it was an Indian Upanishad—or religious work—expounding Brahminical or Buddhistic-doctrines, but because, read by the proper keys, it contains in a measure that which cannot be equally found in any other book extant, the essence of all religion and philosophy, because it is in reality a compendium—and the shortest yet most complete extant—of occult science, philosophy and physiology, or, as we might now term it, a compact *resume* of Theosophy, giving us the concise, concrete summary of all Theosophic tenets:

Oneness of the Divinity, immortality of the Ego, Reincarnation, Karma, Selflessness, the whole system of Cycles and cosmic laws, of races and Evolution, and moreover, the complete Path to Knowledge, through which is obtained the avoidance of the miseries of life, by deliverance from the wheel of rebirths.

Nor can it be a matter of surprise that, in the estimation of many Theosophists, this is the book whose study is most useful, and ought to come immediately after H. P. B.'s Secret Doctrine.

A. MARQUES, F. T. S.

"Only large souls are able to discern and to love sincerity of purpose among the bungling feebleness of achievement."

THEOSOPHY—ITS INSPIRATION.

[Continued from April Number.]

HAS a philosophy that provides such glorious and just opportunities for all, that would fain light the flame of Brotherhood in our hearts, any coldness, any lack of inspiration in it? Nay! rather let me ask, if there seems a lack of warmth in Theosophy, is it not due to our want of recognition, to our inability to rise to the heights it contemplates? Is it not within the power of our own souls to give life and love, and consequently, warmth to anything of which we become a part? And to become a part of anything, must we not first perceive it? And what is the act of perceiving? Do we perceive anything, even of this objective, gross, and, to our senses, very real, world outside of ourselves, outside of the idea within us, which the objective calls up? Then if Theosophy, in its presentation to any intellect, produces no thrill, of warmth, is it because the philosophy is barren of comfort or inspiration? Or, is it that the seven-stringed lyre of that being is not tuned up to the proper pitch? If others find it warm, pulsating with hope and encouragement, and offering a grand outlook for every soul, no matter how lacking in intellect, or how degraded at present, assuring us that we, who cannot now respond to these over-tones, shall some day blossom forth as a leader in the choir of Truth, shall we not say again, the coldness you complain of is within you? For whatever we perceive as truth and give our adherence to, no matter how many times it presents itself in a new dress, we shall find no lack of warmth or inspiration in it, for if we love the truth better than any comfort that preconceived ideas might hold for us, the love we have for truth, flowing into the new form, vivifies it and causes the new form to pulsate with our own heart beats of love. The possibility of our soul to respond and flow into the varying forms of truth, as nature unrolls the scroll of life before us, is helped by the pliability of our minds, or hindered by the strength of our animal nature—our lower self. For, ever the inner and real, the plastic is cabined, cribbed and confined by the form receptacle that contains it.

The savage will gaze upon a master-piece of delicate coloring and find no response, no warmth in it; it will convey no meaning, because the soul has not yet developed; it has not yet played in

matter long enough to reach that point of expression where it can vibrate to color and form in the same degree as the master-tone; to him his red and yellow daubs of war-paint are far lovelier and more satisfying, arousing in him the white heat of passion. Let us ask ourselves, then, if we are pliable, if we are approaching this study from the plane of defensive self-love, which shrinks, cowardlike and false, from responsibility, from the plane of sense-life that desires ease and softness for the self? For, if we are, then indeed Theosophic Truth will be a two-edged sword, that wounds the animal man, while it cuts at the error in his mind.

This element of fixity in us, this dislike to move out and take a new place in nature, or accept new views of life, arises in the law of self-preservation, in the animal nature of man, and finds expression at various points in our daily life. If we run them over, it will not be very difficult to place one's self in the class to which one belongs. A consideration of these expressions may furnish us with a key by which we may tune our nature into harmony with Divine Wisdom.

Do you find it difficult to forget and forgive an injury? All religious teachers demand it. Theosophy insists upon the demand and shows how a man retards his own progress and the progress of Humanity when he does not strive with all his strength toward that God-likeness, which will enable him to forgive those who can find it in their hearts to do him an injury. Is this cold? Or, does it rather require the inspiration from a larger flame of love than we possess to lift us to the height we are commanded to reach.

Is it difficult to think of and care for others in preference to self? The Wisdom Religion points to it as a means for the soul's unfoldment. Is greater love or less required for this?

Is it a great effort to part with money? Theosophy assures us that the love of money is only a drag to the soul if not valued as a means of relieving distress and spreading a knowledge of the law of Eternal Life. "How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God; it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye."

Or, perhaps this is where we stand and shiver; we find it too difficult to shoulder the blame of any act or event we may be re-

lated to, for Theosophy distinctly asserts that we are bearing the consequences of past conduct and that we will go on bearing them through all the ages to come, however it may wound the self-love to hear it. "As ye sow, that shall ye also reap." "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and after many days it shall return to you again."

No wonder people have grown rebellious under misfortune and disappointment, when they believed they had no voice or part in bringing it to pass; when they felt they were helpless and blind victims before the law of creation, over which they had no control.

It seems to me that awful sense of injustice that surges through the suffering heart, compelling it to arraign its own conception of the living God, can never be equaled in bitterness, by any selfish self-pity, caused by an imperfect and partial understanding of the Theosophical view of the evolution of man through the cycling ages.

Do we find it difficult to stay the hasty word? In the Christian Bible it is written that not only shall a man answer for every word he speaketh, but that he is defiled, not by what goeth into the body, but by every word that cometh out of his mouth. Theosophy declares this also, and furthermore explains how and why it is so.

Do we find it difficult to govern the desires of the body, to bear hardship, or discomfort and disappointment? Do we discover within ourselves a desire always to be justified, when falsely accused? Finally, do we think we have already the last word about man and his relation to Deity and the Universe? Do we feel as if our present belief was good for all time to come—the last word of God to man? Do we find it difficult to think of ourselves as becoming something quite different from what we now are? For if we do, in-so-far as any of these seem more or less difficult to us, in-so-far we are lacking in the pliability necessary to allow the soul to fill these Theosophic forms or ideas with love and warmth. No, Theosophy is not lacking in warmth, in inspiration, but its ideals are so lofty, its voice, proclaiming the law of growth, is so imperative, so unyielding, that both ideals and voice seem cold and awful, as the Law is awful in its majesty and immutability. It is especially so to those who have grown with the

years into the way of thinking that this one mortal existence is sufficient preparation for an eternity of easy progress, who must have painted life hereafter to be one flower-bed of ease, and themselves as blooming into the possession of infinite capabilities for happiness, as if happiness could be conferred upon one from environment, if within themselves they had not yet opened up the consciousness of the Divine self—had not become "one with the Father."

Jesus also asserted in plain words "Heaven is within you." The Wisdom Religion works out the proof of this problem (for problem, it must appear to many) how Heaven can be brought out of, or found within the dark and gloomy depths of a consciousness that is all despair, or filled with recollections of hideous failures to reach its ideals. But to every generous soul, to every one who is brave enough to demand that justice be done at any cost, once it finds it can pay its honest debt to God and nature, the doctrines in the Wisdom Religion fill heart and life with true warmth—the warmth of justice done—the warmth of self-respect restored, with the satisfaction that prompts the manly man to suffer for his mistakes himself, believing that the burden will be fitted to the back, and that "as the trial, so shall the strength be;" for the Divine is in every one of us; we have but to call upon it and it will not fail us.

And if, perchance, this sense of loss, this sense of coldness, should lie in the view taken of the continuity of life and the blow struck at our love of these personalities, (hard as I admit this first view to be) I ask you, is it as torturing as the belief that not only shall many be parted forever, when this life is done with, but that a large proportion thus separated, shall go to endless misery? Such belief has been advanced by the Theological dogma of the last 1800 years.

What if in reincarnating our parts are changed? the position of some, mayhap, reversed, when once again the curtain rings up for us upon the stage of this objective existence? Will it not be good, then, to be here, for ourselves and for others, who will have another rehearsal to perfect them in the part it is in them to portray? Is the law that gives a chance to live again, to try again, a cold, vindictive law? Is the voice cold that says "you

have not had time enough, go, try once more, take another part, rehearse again, practice makes perfect?" Do you call that a cold voice that bids you see in every other man a picture of what your soul must learn to avoid or to acquire; that tells you every one should receive from you the most patient and charitable treatment; that bids you see in every man a brother?

The ethical teachings of Christ are Theosophical, and the Wisdom Religion of the ages explains the law upon which Jesus of Nazareth based his command of "be ye perfect." It shows how one is to come unto Him, the Christ; it points out and logically proves that the Christ is within each one. To come unto it, or, even believe that it is there, turning facewards to it, will be the first step on the homeward journey; and, broken in moral strength though we be, though our lives contain deeds that rob our hearts of joy, our minds of rest,—though our whole life has been a sensual gratification—if not until now, bowed with years though we be, the Christ is ever waiting within. It is not too late to cry out, for it is not a far-off Christ, some other personality, but a principle within our very life—our own true, essential self, that waits. No, not waits, but that has been, is *now* shining upon us, giving us the life we are spending like the Prodigal Son, though we know it not, and though some, even, are looking afar off to that other Christ, that Christ who has so often been a matter of doubt, who is so difficult to realize at all times. The same life is in us that was in Jesus and Buddha—the same Spirit or Christ—the Logos! The Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

We might truly say that Theosophia "comes not to do away with the Law, but to fulfill it." For a study of Theosophical literature teaches as clearly, in fact, more clearly, regarding the invisible self than Physiology teaches of the physical body, the instrument upon which we depend for action. With the new understanding which these Theosophical teachings bring, we cannot feel to blame the dear sister of Baptist persuasion who unhesitatingly trusted her salvation to the promise, "Whosoever believeth on Me shall have everlasting life," but could not at the same time believe it possible that the same trustworthy Saviour meant to enforce his Law "Love your enemies."

Because we dimly comprehend the power of Love, and because of the selfishness in us, the fear for the destruction of self, we are able to take hold of the promise of salvation, while because of the positive inability, the total lack of response within our soul to the command "Love your enemies," a command taxing the soul entirely beyond its present power, it is impossible to believe that we must obey the command to love. Theosophy assumes Jesus was no vain trifler, but an Initiate. He meant both the promise and the command; we, as students of the Wisdom Religion know that He meant them and how it is that we can come at last to keep the Law of Love.

The coming unto Christ is by the Law of Love of God in man, by the path of Altruism. Men have said, over and over again, "I give my heart to God;" "I believe on Jesus, the Christ." Alas! foolish men; blind leaders of the blind! In this age, when Truth stands, as it were, at the street corners, pleading to be heard, ye pass by on the other side—deaf, as well as blind.

Which understanding of life and the laws that govern it, has the most power to quicken aspiration and hope in man? That which declares that eternal life and happiness depend upon a belief in a certain dogma, the knowledge of which has not been given to every soul that has lived on earth, necessitating therefore another provisional arrangement being made to save those (or "let them be lost") who lived before the Saviour and Teacher of the Law, and who have lived since in countries where the Law is unknown, who being born since the Law was announced, yet never hear of it, or, who hearing of it, are by their very development unable to understand either the thought or the language it depends upon for transmission,—or, that other theory, which provides one law covering, "as a hen broodeth her chicks," all the children of men; one means adapted for all possible contingencies of human life; equal to the greatest, as well as to the least, demands of the human mind? This theory provides a means by which all the ethical teachings, given out by any Avatar, may be fulfilled, and Christ truly found—Christ the Son—our true Self—the Son of our common Father, who is ONE and in whom all life is. Our life is indeed hidden with Christ in God. To get a realizing sense of which, such as never has been possible to humanity since

the East was forsaken, I offer you the Theosophical Library of Oriental Literature. It is because a great cry has gone up from questioning hearts, from noble and loving souls, for *light, more light* upon the dismal problems of life, a cry wrung from hearts and minds too noble, too great, to be willing to believe that man was given mind to question, only to be mocked by silence—minds and souls, who, in their great humanity, refused to believe that the last word of God to man had been spoken, but who, believing in the injunction, "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you, ask and ye shall receive," applied to the spiritual future of all mankind, have sought, have knocked, have asked, and have received a philosophy from the depths of which may be heard down the corridors of time, the voice of Buddha, Sankyacharya, Jesus, and many other illumined souls, saying to each personality, "Ye are the Temples of the Living God." Be ye perfect, for when God rules, heaven will be found within you. And never until then, and never elsewhere.

VALERIA SHOULTES.

BEHIND THE VEIL.

A DEPARTMENT FOR THE INVESTIGATION BY THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY OF PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES RELATING TO THE PSYCHIC LIFE.

Experiences and explanation of experiences are invited, but all personal or irrelevant details will be omitted.

The Double of a Living Person Forced to Appear and Write a Letter.

MY FRIEND, Dr. Pascal, says on page 429 of the *Lotus Bleu* of Nov., 1895, that one can force the Linga Sharira from a sleeping person, and cause it to write a letter which the sleeper would not sign while awake. The following is a case, the authenticity of which I can personally vouch for, having it directly from one of the actors of the story; and the fact having otherwise been known, at the time, to several Parisian Theosophists.

Colonel A., an English officer on furlough in Paris, had intrusted very valuable documents to the care of a Frenchman, named B., whose room was situated under his own in Favart street, and whom he thought worthy of his confidence. But B., wanting to dis-

honestly use these documents for his own profit, refused to return them to the Colonel, and at last squarely denied ever having received them in charge. Divers circumstances prevented the Colonel from resorting to law, therefore he used every effort to induce B. to give up the papers, he even made him pecuniary offers, all in vain. Tired of fighting he decided to evoke the disloyal guardian during his sleep. In order to carry out this daring project, the Colonel obtained the assistance of one of his friends, Mr. C., a powerful occultist. Having fixed a night for the operation, the two friends passed the day preceding in meditation and prayer. About one o'clock A. M., they heard B. enter his room, and shortly after, a sonorous snoring apprised them that he was asleep. They still waited a little, then uniting and concentrating their wills, they summoned B.'s double to present itself to them. Almost immediately loud raps broke the silence of the room, and the table began to move. The Colonel, who was receptive, took a pencil and paper, and suddenly, in answer to the question "Who is here?" was made aloud. His hand moved as if in anger and traced these words upon the paper: "Yes, it is I, B——. What do you want of me?"

There then followed a scene as curious as violent. The two evokers insisted that B. should tell them where he had hidden the papers. B. obstinately refused to do so and manifested great anger shaking the mediums hand, breaking the mediums pencil, tearing the paper and filling the room with strange noises. At last dominated by the superior force of the operators he ended by confessing that he had secreted the papers in a drawer opening by means of a hidden spring. He was then made to describe the cabinet that contained the drawer, the method of working the spring, also the room where the cabinet was. This room belonged to a house situated in the opposite quarter of the City, Dugommier street. It was kept securely locked and the key had been entrusted by B. to one of his employees residing in the house. "Give us the means to act upon this man," demanded the two evokers. "Write out an order to this man that we be allowed to enter the room and take the papers." Thus commanded, B. wrote, but slowly, spasmodically, as if compelled by force, an order to the keeper of the room. "Give him this note and he will let you enter—but," he

added, "I shall revenge myself yet, (he struck the table angrily with the pencil) yes, I am forced to yield now, but I will not let you go. I will accuse you of having stolen these papers from me, and you will be obliged to return them." "We will see about that," said the Colonel, coldly. He then adjured B. to realize his dishonesty after which the double was left to itself.

Though exhausted by such a scene, the evokers did not take any repose for fear of losing a moment. They repaired to the house where the papers were secreted. As soon as day appeared they knocked at the door of the keeper of the documents and showing him B.'s note, they were at once admitted to the room. Thanks to the indications received, they were not long in finding the papers which they immediately took possession of. Returning to Col. C.'s apartment they determined that the papers should be placed in safety. In less than an hour they were mailed to the address of the Colonel's business agent at London where they would be completely out of B.'s reach. They did well in acting so promptly. The morning of the same day, B. had awakened with the perfect remembrance of the scene in which he had taken a constrained part, without, however, being able to tell if it was the impression of a dream or a reality. Suddenly siezed with great anxiety about the documents, he dressed himself hastily and ran to Dugommier street and on arriving, ordered his men to let no one, under any pretext, enter the room of which they had the key. "But," replied the guardian, "the two gentlemen who came this morning, almost before day light, came with your order, and I have permitted them in consequence to enter." With a terrible oath, B. hastened to the room, opened the drawer, and one can imagine his rage against the guardian and against the conjurors, when he found that the papers had disappeared. Returning at once to Favart street, he forced an entrance into the Colonel's apartment and pouring forth violent insults, accused him of stealing, as if the papers had never been his, and added that he would force him to return them.

"I do not think that you will succeed," answered the Colonel, "for they are already en route for England, where they will be beyond the reach of knaves of your species."

As incredible as it may appear, B., blinded by rage and cupidity, had resorted to law to recover his documents. The Colonel was

cited before the justice of the district, under the clause of fraudulent detention of documents, for the purpose of obtaining authorization to prosecute him before a higher tribunal. When the parties came in the presence of the Judge, B., who was plaintiff, was invited to detail the terms of his accusation. He began to relate the scene of the evocation; but he had hardly commenced when the magistrate, thinking that he had to deal with a madman, cut him short, saying: "Sir, it is enough. I have no time to lose with the mentally diseased. The case is heard." B., seized with rage, wanted to continue. The Judge gave a sign to the court officer, and resumed: "If you add a word, I will send you to Charenton!" B. had nothing more to ask and disappeared. Turning towards the Colonel, the magistrate politely excused himself for the inconvenience and annoyance that had been caused him by a man whose mind was certainly deranged, and told him that he could retire. Thus ended the affair.

The Colonel had evidently benefited through the general ignorance concerning occult questions; but it is well to add that nothing less than the existence of his right, the importance of the interests of which he was charged, and the impossibility, under the circumstances, to obtain the papers by the ordinary way, decided him to use the dreadful means of a forced externalization of the Double.

—*Translated from Lotus Bleu by L.*

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY.

This Department is intended to be one of Actual Experience. Any items showing the aid Theosophy gives in daily life will be welcome.

A THOUGHT.

IN the sea of finite thought we are in the great central calm, or in the Gulf-Stream—or, where the tide comes in—or down in the deep where the corals grow; it makes no difference, we are where the quality of our thinking ruts us and "each one in his place is best." Every part touches every other part through the mighty whole, through the past and the present and we are at one in the ebb and flow of thought throughout the universe. Those who are at the top are in the sunlight; they glow with the warmth of a life that is felt from shore to shore and dips into the depth of

all below. All are neighbors; we must give and we must take from each other by the law of the ocean of which we are a part. We cannot conceal a thought; it has a voice that will be felt, and will be heard. When it is thought, then, that moment, behold it is written; we write it in the harmony of our own selves, and it speaks in musical notes that fit into the harmony of the whole; or we try to sing a tune of our own, that has no melody in it. When we think, selfishly, fearfully or doubtfully, we are either echoing the disturbance which has arisen in some strata deep down below us, or we are starting a pulse of woe, which running its course through the vast expanse of mind-ocean, must return to us in some form of our own inharmony.

When we think lovingly, faithfully and hopefully, we have caught a glimpse of the Sun, and our true thought smiles itself into our neighbor's heart. We have added to the world of harmony the world of truth, and so strengthened and raised the whole.

Let no one who thinks count his life of little worth; the gift of thought makes him a potentate whose power nothing can stay. Out of his heart goes forth the voice of his thought and it is read in shafts of light which vibrate in as myriad forms of beauty, as the crystals on the snow, or, he hurls it in bolts of darkness which can people hell; we breath it out in cadences of love—as soothing as the song in a sea shell, or he flings it in lightening flashes which mutilate and destroy. I will not estimate my friend's outfit by the style of his garments, nor the number and size of his trunks; the first is a display of his taste and his wealth moulded by the fickle goddess of fashion; the latter can go to the lumber room or occupy a place in my house. But your thoughts! O, my friend, enter not into my house laden with discords of selfishness; if you do the voice of your thought will speak to me from everything you touch. I shall read of you in those colors when I lift a book you have handled; I shall feel that tread in the carpet where you have walked. An evil will sit in your chair—will face me at the table, will recline on the sofa and fill my house with blackness long after you and your luggage have gone. Though you may think that smiles and plausible words have scarcely held the images of your hate, concealment itself has spoken in your thought; the images that murder friendship have all the time been unchained and at

large spreading desolation upon everything you have touched, poisoning the atmosphere of your presence. Come to me with no concealments; come with the sunshine of love filling every corner and cranny of your heart; bring no luggage but the Truth in yourself, and my house will be illuminated by your presence; your coming will be a blessed gift, so that he who comes after will exclaim "This is the house Beautiful and Bountiful!" and I will answer "A guest has been with me who filled all my coffers with precious gems; he made an instrument of melody of everything he touched; it is his touch you felt, his beauty that you see". And so your coming will multiply in its blessedness and the clear light of your thought will send its rays through all my house, and far across the fields, across the spaces of life. I will go out into the night and standing under the stars will dream of thankfulness and peace, and in the quiet of that peace the consciousness will come to me, that it is the thought of my friend whose voice I am nearing in the stars; and then I shall know that it was the Divine Guest who tarried with me; and, "His going forth is unto the end of the heavens.'

The thought which my friend evoked stirs in the grandeur of the heavens and in the silence of the depth of the sea. It brings love and hope and peace; it lights the pathway of all life and is the heritage of all life; it has a kinship with all that is, but it is not his nor mine to be shut away—it is the world's! it is a city whose center is God, and all its gates are lifted up, and all its halls are Light! its breadth is greater than the breadth of the sea for it holds the sea; it is stronger than the heavens for it may roll them up within itself as within a scroll, while Thought still lives on.

LYDIA BELL.

Duty stands for the most part close at hand, unobserved, simple, immediate. If any man has the will to hear her voice, to him is she willing to enter and to be his ready guest.

Do not let any of us complain that our circumstances are making us evil. Let us manfully confess, one and all, that the evil lies in us, not in them.

AROUND THE ZODIAC.

MAY 21st the sun enters the sign of Gemini, "The Twins." This sign represents the Logos, Manas. It is the base of the triangle formed by Aries and Taurus, Spirit and Substance, hence Gemini is the child, that which manifests. As a type of Manas, Gemini is dual; in the Ancient Zodiacs this duality was symbolized by a male and female figure, but in our Zodiac it is typed by the twin brothers, Castor and Pollux, one mortal the other immortal. Gemini is the home of Mercury, the planet ruling the intellect, according to Astrology.

Gemini rules the arms and hands which are the organs of doing, of building. The hand executes, or brings forth, that which the brain conceives, it externalizes thought; hence it is related to the voice, or the Logos whose symbol it is on the plane of material. The hand is also the expression of power and guidance; it holds the sceptre and the guiding light, both attributes of the Logos.

Its gem is the Beryl, it rules the Garnet and all striped stones. The plants akin to it are meadow-sweet, tansy and madder. Gemini rules the United States, whose people are true children of Mercury.

On the other side of the bridge of this life, there is neither day nor night; neither decay nor death; nor sorrow, nor virtue, nor vice. The soul on that other side refraineth of itself from vice. This is the sinless Brahma Lok. After crossing the bridge, the blind lose their blindness, the miserable their misery, and the sorrowful their sorrow. On crossing the bridge darkness becomes light. This Brahma Lok shineth of itself.

—*Chandoga Upanishad.*

There is one eternal law in Nature, one that always tends to adjust contraries and to produce final harmony. It is because this law supersedes the physical and purely intellectual, that mankind will become freed from its false gods, and find itself finally—Self-redeemed.

—*Secret Doctrine.*

T. S. ECHOES.

AMERICAN SECTION CONVENTION.

The Tenth Annual Convention of the American Section, T. S., was carried on in a genuine fraternal spirit that seemed a realization of the prophecy of the old Scotch poem:

"She saw till the sorrows of men were bye,
And all was love and harmony."

After the isolated efforts of the past year, this joining of hands and hearts deeply encouraged the Chicago Theosophists, and sent a wave of strengthening impulse to the home-fields of the visitors, and, I trust, psychically to all who were with the Convention in thought.

Mr. Alexander Fullerton arrived on Tuesday from New York, and was present at the regular Chicago Branch meeting, Wednesday evening. Other visitors were: Mrs. Kate Buffington Davis of Minneapolis, who may well be considered the heart of the movement of which Mr. Fullerton is the head; Dr. J. W. B. La Pierre, Pres. Ishwara Branch, now living in Matawan, Mich., and who has attended every American Convention except one; Mrs. Marie F. Miller of St. Paul; Mr. F. E. Titus, cor. sec. of Toronto, T. S.; Mrs. Kate H. Maguire and Mrs. Kirby of Toledo, and Mr. Nins of Muskegon, Michigan.

A reception was given Mr. Fullerton and visiting delegates Saturday evening at the Head quarters, and proved a social success.

The Convention was called to order by the General Secretary at 10:30 o'clock Sunday morning, April 26, 1896. Dr. La Pierre was elected Temporary Chairman, and Miss Netta E. Weeks, Sec. of the C. B. T. S., was chosen as Scretary. The Chair appointed Mr. George E. Wright, Mr. F. E. Titus and Mrs. Davis Committee on Credentials, and the Secretary then read the roll of branches and delegates as follows:

Chicago Branch T. S., MR. MARPOLE WILLIS, President.

MRS. EDITH SEARS,	} Delegates.
MISS NETTA E. WEEKS,	
MR. R. A. BURNETT,	

Willamette T. S., DR. MARY WEEKS BURNETT, Proxy.

Ishwara T. S., DR. LA PIERRE, President.

Muskegon T. S., MR. NIMS, Delegate.

Narada T. S., MR. GEO. E. WRIGHT, Proxy.

Toronto T. S., MR. F. E. TITUS, Delegate.

Toledo Branch, MRS. KATE MAGUIRE, (President's Proxy)	} Delegates.
MRS. K. H. KIRBY,	

Harmony Lodge,	} ALEXANDER FULLERTON, Proxy.
Annie Besant T. S.	
Boise City T. S.	

Shila T. S., Chicago, HORACE E. WELLS, President.

St. Paul T. S., MRS, MILLER, delegate.

Golden Gate Lodge, 2 votes, ALEX. FULLERTON, Proxy.

Aloha T. S., Honolulu " " "

Dyana T. S. (No representative.)

The report of the Committee on Credentials was then accepted and the committee discharged.

Mr. Geo. E. Wright of Chicago was unanimously elected Permanent Chairman, and the business began.

The General Secretary first read a salutation to the Convention from the President-Founder, in the course of which he said that among the sixty million souls in this country there were room for 20 American Sections to do good work. He then read a lengthy and instructive letter from the Vice-President of the Society, Mr. Sinnett, and a greeting from G. R. S. Mead, Gen'l. Sec. European Section, in which he noted the recent evolution of Theosophical literature. A beautiful letter from Mrs. Besant arrived too late for reading in the convention and will be printed with the others in the regular report.

The Convention expressed its acknowledgments for these communications by a resolution of thanks to be forwarded to each writer by the Secretary.

The Chairman then appointed Committees on Auditing, on Resolutions, and on Nominations, and the Convention then listened with earnest approval to the report of the Gen'l Secretary, at the close of which the meeting adjourned.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT.

BRETHERN OF THE CONVENTION:

As we assemble to-day for the 10th Annual Convention of the American Section, one thought is of necessity dominant in every mind, one pain acute in every breast. It would be uncandid to ignore it, futile to disregard it. When we compare our shrunken delegations, our limited attendance, with the joyous throng which has for years past marked our regular anniversary; when we think of the sad causes which brought about a secession from the Theosophical Society and the loss of many of its most earnest members; when we picture what might have been the gathering and the spirit of to-day; it is inevitable that a cloud should settle upon our hearts. And yet these are not the saddest features of the case. To me there is something more pathetic in the unveiling of a character long and justly honored for its marvelous intensity and devotion, in the shattering of a reputation gained through years of work most heroic and most enviable, in the collapse of a soul fortified, as was well believed, by exceptional privilege and wisdom. And when we look over the history of the last two years and see the discords, the suspicions, the antagonisms, fretting, exciting, cleaving what was to be the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood, the paralysis to interest and endeavor, the check to healthful work, the expenditure of strength on controversy rather than on our mission, the pain and misgiving to sincere souls, the shadow of doubt encompassing the highest ideals and the most solid truths, the chill to hope and faith and

effort, the pitiable stumbling and fall along the Path by many to whom it had hitherto been a way of assurance and strength, the distrust, the soreness, the sorrow, the despair of some whom nothing else could so have moved, can one marvel that the heart sinks and the hands are folded and the head bent? Nor is this all. For the West was awakening to the sound of good news in truth and motive as it was voiced by Theosophy, and everywhere were enlarging the interest, and the welcome and the influence. Now the teaching is doubted, the organization discredited, the movement hampered. Men point to our own disorders and ask why the doctrine which was to regenerate a world has not saved a leader from moral wreck, and a Society from disruption. And what can we answer? Only that a truth is not vitiated by the inconsistency of its advocates, and that a principle which has been traversed would have vindicated itself if it had been obeyed. This is fact; yet it has been urged at crises in every ethical or religious history, and men weary of it as of an oft-told tale.

I do not believe in ignoring the gravity of the present era, nor in failing to meet the facts with open eyes and an unreserved mind. Theosophy has certainly received discredit, its onward sweep has been greatly checked, the Society has been weakened and its work impaired. Let us frankly concede this. "There is no religion higher than Truth."

Happily these are not the only facts. Transcending them, more vital, impressive, pregnant, is the greater fact that the Society has been true to its Motto. We may be lessened, weakened, shriveled, but at least it has been demonstrated that, if deceit in spiritual things is to be carried on, it must be carried on outside and not within our body. When ordinary processes failed to reach the case, and when, after the Indian Section had taken the stand that prompt excision must be applied, there was seen the certainty that the European and Australasian Sections would do likewise, they who oppose the action of an aroused conscience perceived that further opposition would be fruitless. Safety through departure was the only course. And so it came about that this lamentable secession occurred, lamentable if we regard delusions of mind and morals, and the immediate effects on the Cause we love, yet with another aspect if we regard it as a proclamation to the world that no name is so indispensable that it may not be put away if its retention means a blinking at right. And so to-day the Theosophical Society stands before modern life as avowing that it will sacrifice members however prized, numbers however valuable, strength however cherished, resources however rich, rather than allow imposture to maintain itself. And ethical movement can tolerate no sham, no unreality. Better far that it be feeble in volume and strong in moral earnestness than that, great and imposing and daily swelling, it should be pervaded with the poison of untruth and honeycombed with deceptions and guile. And as time rolls on, this, we may well believe, will be seen. Men will realize that only conscience can insist on rectitude at the expense of loss, that they who prefer vindication of right to gain through error as they who will maintain principle when it costs. This is not a light compensation for the sadness of the time. It cheers now, and it will be an honorable heritage for the society in years to come. Advices from India show already the good effects of the purification.

One or two other points concerning the events of April, 1895, and then we may gladly pass on to the history of the year.

Not for controversial purposes, for controversy between us and those who have left us is ended, but for an important matter in accurate terminology there should be noticed the names elected by the late members of the Theosophical Society in this country who have formed a new organization.

That name, as you know, is "The Theosophical Society in America." It means of course, "That part of the Theosophical Society which has its field in America." But obviously that cannot be a part in America which is not a part of the Theosophical Society at all, any more than it could be in Mexico or Africa or China, or than that could be "The Geographical Society in America" which was not a part in any way of "The Geographical Society." To be a part of a body means to be an integral constituent of it, in full participation in its organism and life and functions, a sharer of and contributor to its unity. If wholly outside its organization, owning no hold, allegiance, union, identity, it may be a useful and valuable association, but it is no part of the body itself. Moreover, the particular title in question is already the property of the American Section, for, as you will see in its Constitution, Art. 1, Section 7, the American Section is described and defined as "The Theosophical Society in America." Without an amendment to our Constitution we could not vacate our existing right, nor even then without an incongruity, a contradiction, which fact would nullify.

Still again with no controversial purpose, but simply because history requires this record, a word upon another matter. It is a well-established rule of law, many times enunciated in ecclesiastical cases, that members of an organization seceding from it leave behind them the effects collected for and belonging to the organization, these appertaining to the old and continuing body, and to which the secession vacates claim. In the case of the American Section T. S., this rule was not observed. The property of the Section, including its records, was appropriated by those leaving. It is true that a *pro rata* share in money was offered to those remaining, but this was done without agreement by the rest concerned, the sum was fixed on no declared principle of computation, and for the records and documents no money valuable was assignable. Happily there has never been any wish to contest the action legally, the matter is past, and only needs mention here lest it should be supposed unperceived.

When the proceedings of last April's Convention were consummated, several devoted Theosophists in Chicago and on the Pacific Coast earnestly exerted themselves to preserve the Section, and with great energy collected the names of loyal Branches and members that would unite in keeping alive the Theosophical Society in America. It is to their devotion that we owe our continued existence to-day, and one cannot too greatly honor them for what they have done for us, for the Cause, for the Masters behind it. I had myself no share in this work, and I envy those who had. They then memorialized President Olcott for recognition of the loyal Branches and members as the American Section; he both gave recognition and, in view of the impossibility of carrying out at the time our ordinary provision for elections, appointed as a council for the temporary conduct for the Section Mr. Geo. E. Wright of Chicago; Mrs. Kate B. Davis of Minneapolis; Mr. Wm. J. Walters of San Francisco, and myself, I to act as General Secretary. The work of reorganization then went steadily and systematically onwards, and to-day it is possible to make accurate report of our condition.

Thirteen loyal Branches announced their continued adherence to the Section, but of these the Port Townsend T. S., Port Townsend, Wash., afterwards surrendered its Charter and dissolved, as did also the Indra T. S. of Clinton, Iowa. The Annie Besant T. S., East Las Vegas, N. M., was chartered on July 20th with 9 members. The Golden Gate Lodge T. S., San Francisco, and the Narada T. S., Tacoma, Wash., voted to secede from the Section and join the new organization, but in each case the loyal minority incorporated under State law and applied for Charter under the old name. There was, of course,

inconvenience in the existence of two bodies in the same town and with the same name, the one belonging to the Theosophical Society, the other to an outside organization, but it was essential that the name should conform to the corporate title, and it was felt also that the loyalists had right to the name as being still members of the Society. The Council, therefore, in each case voted unanimously to issue the Charter. The St. Paul T. S. finally decided to adhere to the Section, and official word has been received from the Aloha T. S. and the Hawaii Lodge T. S., Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands, that they are loyal, have consolidated under the former name, and continue in the Section. There are, therefore, now fifteen Branches in the Section:—Chicago T. S.; Willamette T. S., Portland, Oregon; Ishwara T. S., Minneapolis; Muskegon T. S.; Narada T. S., Tacoma; Toronto T. S.; Toledo T. S.; Harmony Lodge T. S., Los Angeles; Annie Besant T. S., East Las Vegas, N. M.; Boise T. S., Boise City, Idaho Terr.; Shila T. S., Chicago; Dhyana T. S., Los Angeles; Golden Gate Lodge T. S., San Francisco; St. Paul T. S., St. Paul, Minn.; and Aloha T. S., Honolulu, H. I.

The following are the year's statistics:—Admissions, 40; resignations, 9; deaths 3. After communicating with all persons on the roll of members-at-large, I have dropped from it such as refrain from replying. We now have (April 1st) 189 members upon the Branch lists, and 92 upon the roll of members-at-large: total, 281.

Upon the reconstruction of the Section, Mr. Wm. J. Walters of San Francisco, who had founded and was conducting the *Mercury* as a Theosophical monthly for children, generously offered to enlarge it into a Sectional organ, to be edited by any one those interested might select. This offer was gratefully accepted, though of course Mr. Walters' continued editorship was insisted on, two F. T. S. agreed to aid him as Associates, and *Mercury* is thus the representative of the T. S. in America, and *Lucifer* is for the T. S. in Europe. The children's interests are looked after in a department. Unfortunately our members have by no means universally subscribed to *Mercury*, although the price is but \$1.00 a year, and although it is most essential to the Sectional work that a monthly organ should be maintained. With our exceedingly small dues, but \$1.00 a year, it would seem easy for every member to take this periodical, and surely the large deficit should not fall upon one individual, already giving his little spare time to this work. We may all well feel it pleasure to give both subscription and donation to this our one periodical, and thus ensure its continuance.

Chicago is the natural centre of the existing Section, for there is its strongest Branch, with Headquarters and varied activity. No doubt you will be told in full of the three new enterprises now carried on there, the Extension Centre, the Lecture Bureau, and the Publication Fund, the last to secure the issue of the 3d volume of *The Secret Doctrine* under the best conditions here. If all these enterprises receive the cordial aid of all our members, Theosophical truth and energy may be made to stream in every direction, and the mission of the T. S., even in its sadly depleted state, be worthily fulfilled.

It was intended that a long-established activity of the Section, *The Theosophical Forum*, should be maintained as heretofore, and I was invited to conduct it. But the present means of the Section have not justified this expense, and the weakness of my hand from writer's cramp has made it impossible for me to supply the regular matter. Happily our want has been largely met through the great kindness of Mr. Mead, the General Secretary of the European Section, who has every month sent over copies of the *Vahan* sufficient to furnish each member-at-large in good standing and each Branch Secretary. This was a truly fraternal offering, and keeps us well in touch with the European Section and its news.

You will learn from the Acting Treasurer's Report that the surplus on hand is \$320.91. But this amount includes a number of special donations which can hardly be counted upon this year; and, moreover, it will be greatly depleted by the cost of printing the Convention Proceedings and by other unavoidable outlays. Though we have at present no office rent to pay, and though much expense has been saved by donations in printing and stationery, our small dues of \$1.00 cannot possibly cover even our modest expenses, and each member should realize that now, as heretofore, the support of the Section is made possible only through voluntary offerings. If each supplements his dues with such gifts as he can afford, our needs will be met. One dollar a year does not represent what of benefit we owe to the Theosophical Society, nor what it requires for its existence and successful work.

I am glad to report that individual liberality has very largely supplied the working material in documents, etc., of which we were despoiled, and that an arrangement with the European Section for the use of its stone enabled us to secure an ample supply of diplomas. The new leaflets issued in Chicago will be reported to you by the local officials.

The neglect of several Branches to act upon the Revised Constitution of the T. S. has prevented my reporting to the President-Founder the vote of the Section.

The Narada T. S. is the only Branch not having paid dues, and is without right to representation among us to-day.

So great are the changed conditions of the Section that some alterations in its Constitution are imperative. We do not need so many Councillors nor so many members on the Executive Committee; it is not needful that 3 members of the Executive Committee be residents of the same place as the General Secretary for the time being; the number 7 instead of 5 will need to be the minimum of persons applying for Branch Charter, if the Revised Rules as passed by the Indian Section last December are adopted by the other Sections; and some other changes may be discerned important. All will form part of our work to-day.

Five years ago on May 8th, 1891, our great and beloved leader, H. P. B., passed from this incarnation and her then work. As we commemorate on White Lotus Day herself and her mission, we may well recall the marvelous devotion, the changeless zeal which made the Theosophical Society possible, and the passionate love of unity which would, we know, have kept it one. True honor to her will, rather *must*, excite in us the hope that such love will still bear fruit, and that long before her next incarnation the Society she so cherished will realize her ideal.

What is to be the future of the American Section? Exactly what our strength and energy combine to make it. Every reason for work exists just as vitally as it did in 1894, and even our number of Branches is larger than in 1886, nine years before the schism. Theosophic truth remains as heretofore, Theosophic motive is as potent, Theosophic duty has not changed, Theosophic help is as assured. If with true consecration we determine upon circulating among our fellow-men the great truths which have regenerated our own purposes and are to regenerate those of humanity, the fact that we are feeble need not appall, even discourage. If we do 'all that we can, we do, as the Masters have said, all that They ask. If we do all that They ask, that doing will certainly not pass unhelped. It is really for us to say what shall be our future. Steady, earnest, persistent, devoted work will tell. For this we have responsibility, not for the results. They belong to the Law and to Karma. We have no need to harass ourselves with anxieties as to the outcome, though we certainly need to examine ourselves very carefully to assure that motive

thrills with utmost vigor and effort falls not below its highest reach. The minor cycle is nearly over, the passing century nearly closed, and this too gives an impulse towards all possible achievement. Perhaps, furthermore, such well-spent years, full of zeal and kindly thought and the spirit of true Theosophy, may not be without sympathetic influence on others interested in the same aims, and that the time may thus be hastened when all Theosophists, single in motive and generosity and devotion, may yearn for fraternal heart, fraternal convictions, fraternal unity. "That they all may be one" was a very beautiful prayer from a very beautiful character; we shall honor ourselves and the ideal he and all great Teachers held aloft if we echo it. Time effaces discords and surface cleavages, but it never abrades the fundamental rock of Truth and Humanity. On that all may find securest permanence; above it may be erected a world wide temple, sheltering every one who loves right, cherishes duty, and serves the race.

ALEXANDER FULLERTON,
General Secretary.

At the opening of the afternoon session at 3 p. m. the committees who had been working during the recess reported to the body. The Auditing Committee's business was first disposed of. Mrs. Buffington Davis as Chairman of Committee then read the various resolutions, first covering the amendments to the by-laws. Among these was one providing that representation to Convention should be one delegate for every seven members, in place of the President of a branch representing the first five. The date of Convention was changed to the 2nd Sunday in June, after some discussion, in order to have the advantage of summer rates and vacation freedom. Resolutions were presented, begging Annie Besant to come to us as soon as she could, and cordially accepting Countess Wachtmeister's offer to visit the Section. Also the following:

"*Resolved*, That the Convention of the Am. Sec. recommends to earnest fellows of the Society a study of the literature put forth in the last year by the London Centre. Foremost in value is the 3rd Vol. of the Secret Doctrine, which will be published simultaneously in London and Chicago. Also the articles on Occultism in *Lucifer*, by Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater; the scholarly researches of Mr. Mead, the Theosophical Manuals; and the published lectures of Mrs. Besant, especially those called 'In the Outer Court,' written for the personal help of aspirants.'

Resolutions of gratitude to the President-Founder for his support, and "unflinching strength," and to Mr. Fullerton were passed.

The Committee on Nominations then presented names of officers. Mr. Fullerton was unanimously elected General Secretary. The following five were placed in the Executive Committee:

Mrs. Kate Buffington Davis, Mr. Geo. E. Wright, Mr. Wm. John Walters, Mr. F. E. Titus, and Mr. Fullerton.

Fifteen Councillors were elected as follows:

Alfred S. Brolley, Albany, N. Y., Dr. Eliz. M. Chidester, New Water-

ford, Ohio, Robert A. Burnett, Julia A. Darling and Edith Sears, all of Chicago, Miss Marie Walsh, Mission, San Jose, Mrs. Louise Thomas, Port Townsend, Wash., Edson D. Hammond, Cleveland, O., Geo. B. Hastings, Tonawanda, Mrs. Sarah G. E. Solley, Hampton, Mass., Sarah E. Merritt, Pasadena, Cal., Lyman Gibbs, Boston, John T. Crawford, Wyoming, S. E. Gould, Manchester, N. H., and Ida R. Patch, Washington, Pa.

All the nominations, like the resolutions were passed unanimously. In fact no dissenting voice was heard during the proceedings. The body was a happy unit.

Business being over, a helpful discussion on methods of work closed the afternoon session. Mention was made of the founding of the Theosophical Book Concern to advance funds to bring out the 3d. Vol. Secret Doctrine. Mr. Titus suggested that names of interested parties be forwarded to this concern that catalogues and literature might be mailed to them. Mr. Fullerton spoke of the tour of Mr. Staples to Branches who may invite this brother. It is expected he will prolong his visit in Chicago, making short lecture tours from here. The Countess will also settle down here and make this her center of work for some time. Attention was called to the correspondence scheme of "Hands Across the Sea" of Mrs. Cooper-Oakley. She recommends formation of Secret Doctrine classes, and offers to help such by sending lectures and series of questions. Members are invited to join her correspondence class in the S. D. and also one on the Astral Plane.

The evening session opened at eight o'clock, with an audience filling the rooms. Three papers were read:—The Royal Road by Mrs. M. L. Brainard; Words of H. P. Blavatsky, read by Mr. Marpole Willis, and the Mission of the Theosophist by E. Sears. The Convention closed after a splendid address by Mr. Fullerton on Theosophy, its practicability.

An informal home-gathering of Chicago friends met Monday afternoon and evening at 5214 Hibbard Ave. to meet Mrs. Davis and Mr. Fullerton. At this loving feast we gave our Gen'l. Secretary Godspeed for his next year's work; his dignity and earnestness show how grandly he has risen to the responsibilities and honors thrust upon his modesty.

The great success of this first official meeting of the reincarnated Section is not measured by numbers, but by the depth and purity of the devotion of individual souls. With brotherly love in our hearts, and encouraged by those true servants of the Masters who are speeding to us across both oceans, we can go forward on the stony path in the calm assurance that Those we follow will never desert us.

Hopefully and fraternally yours,

EDITH SEARS.

Australia.

The Second Annual Convention of the Australasian Section of the Theosophical Society was held at 178 Collins street on Friday and Saturday last. There were present delegates from Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and New Zealand. Mr. H. W. HUNT, president of the Melbourne Theosophical Society, was elected chairman of the Convention. Congratulatory messages were received from Colonel OLCOTT, president-founder of the society, and also from the heads of the European and Indian sections, and from the Countess WACHMEISTER. Mr. J. C. STAPLES, general secretary of the section, gave a most satisfactory report of the work done during the past year, which had resulted in a number of new branches and increased membership. Owing to increased number of branches and of the work generally in New Zealand, it is proposed to form a separate New Zealand section of the society.

The Convention was occupied for two days on its business. It discussed the proposed revised rules of the Society and approved of the draft submitted by the Indian Section with a few alterations. It was agreed to give the General Secretary leave of absence for six months during the next year. Arrangements were made as to his work during his absence, as to finances, the business of the Theosophical Book Depots, the enlargement of the monthly magazine, *Theosophy in Australasia*, and so on. Public meetings, addressed by delegates, were held on Saturday, 5th inst., at the Australian Church Hall, and on Sunday at the South Yarra Hall. On both occasions the halls were well filled, and much interest taken in the speeches and in the questions answered.

Countess Wachtmeister arrived in San Francisco from Honolulu, May 16th, and was given a public reception in Beethoven Hall the evening of her arrival. She will deliver about four Public Lectures while in this City.

A telegram just received announces that Mr. J. C. Staples has sailed direct for England.

Two beautiful birds (the human soul and the divine soul) live together in one tree—the body. They live together and are each other's companion. One of them, the human soul, enjoyeth with pleasure, sitting in the branches, the fruits of its actions. The other, the Divine, at the top of the tree watcheth without enjoying anything, it witnesseth merely what the other doeth. The soul immersed in the body being poor and sorely afflicted, grieveth; but when it seeth God and his glory it becometh griefless.

—Murdak Upanishad.

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER.

[This Department will be devoted exclusively to children ; questions and answers from Lotus Circles on Theosophical Subjects are invited and will receive special attention.]

AIDS.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN MARCH NUMBER.

32.—It is quite possible that each one of us possesses the “possibilities” of adeptship; and we are told in the Secret Doctrine that in the distant future of our planet, say the sixth and seventh rounds, all the earth people then living will be more advanced than many adepts of the present time; but in this fourth round, in which we live, those possibilities are latent. No one would ever dream of the existence of these possibilities in the average person. The fact is, very few ever attain to great excellence in any thing; genius or even extraordinary skill is so rare that we are always amazed at it. To be an adept, in the Theosophical sense, is to be a genius in spiritual development, hence if the world does homage to a Sandow, a Patti or an Edison it is but natural that those who recognize the spiritual should bow in awe and reverence before an adept; but in our present condition of ignorance we are very apt to take tinsel for gold.

33.—Many a cycle comes and goes and no one, save the Master, knows anything of it. Night and day are cycles; every birthday ends and begins a cycle of our personal lives. Nations, races, aye, even the planet itself, have their day and night, their new and full moons, their winters and summers, their growth, their maturity, their decay; and these periods are cycles of beginning and ending, of birthdays and death days; the ending is a beginning, the death day ushers in a birthday. And, as it is sometimes with individuals, these beginnings, these maturities, these endings come suddenly, then there is catastrophe; but more often they come gradually, silently, as the touches of God's hand, the tones of his voice are want to come; only the soul that watches and listens sees the touch or hears the word.

35.—A soul is not spirit; it is a form made up of hopes, fears, joys, sorrows, feelings, and thoughts of many kinds. It is a child of the Higher Self; and just as a child may wander away from its

parents and lose itself in a great city, or in the depths of a forest, where it may die of hunger or be killed, so that our pretty Alice or our merry Frank be lost to the world, so may the soul cut itself loose from the Higher Self and be lost in the Astral world, where it will at last disintegrate, that is, the elements composing it will return to their first form, and that soul can no longer return as a conscious being to the home of its divine parent, the Higher Self.

NOTE.—The question on “Personality and Individuality” will be answered next month.

LINES.

Once while through this world I wandered,
 Heavy-laden and opprest;
 I met a brother pilgrim, journeying,
 Seeking Knowledge ever blest.
 Met a pilgrim and a stranger,
 Whom I'd never seen before;
 Yet it seemed that long I'd known him,
 Known him in the days of yore.
 And the soul within me wondered,
 Wondered where we'd met before.
 Surely there's an explanation,
 Of this Psychical relation;
 Surely we have met before.

Scarcely had this feeling thrilled me,
 And my thoughts were not expressed;
 E'er the pilgrim, full of gladness,
 Made his feelings manifest.
 Said he; “In my inmost being,
 “It comes upon me more and more;
 “That once on a time I knew you,
 “Knew you on some distant shore.
 “Perhaps I can dispel your wonder,—
 “Know ye not the Mystic Law?—
 “In some previous incarnation,
 “Is the only explanation
 “Of the way we met before.”

WILLIAM FREDERICKSON SABIN, F. T. S.